



Names in Belgium and the Netherlands

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DUTCH AND FRISIAN NAMES IN THE NETHERLANDS

- Dutch names are characterized by the wide variety of items that might be unfamiliar to people who are not familiar with such names. One of the most common is an additional element called a *tussenvoegsel* or 'insert.' For example, in the name Dick Van Dyke, 'van' is the *tussenvoegsel*. It is NOT part of the surname! It is a separate element. Dick van Dyke, for example, will be alphabetized under 'D' and NOT 'v.' When searching in Dutch websites, be aware that there will be a separate search box for the *tussenvoegsel* in addition to the given and surname search boxes.
- The Dutch also sometimes used a patronym. This could be a 'last name,' such as Jan Willems or could be used as a 'middle name' such as in Jan Willems Zijlstra. Willems comes from his father's name, i.e. Willem. This system is particularly common in the northeastern part of the country. Keep in mind, though, that not all people will have a *tussenvoegsel* or patronym.
- Dutch names often exhibit a wide variety of spellings. For example, here are some possible spellings of the same name: Hendricks, Hendriks, Hendrickx, Hendrix, Hendricx, Hendrics. The way to solve this problem without searching each name is to use a wildcard. Use:
 - * for multiple letters— Hendri* will return all the forms above and any other spellings that begin with <hendri>
 - ? for one letter— 'Jans?en' will return both 'Janssen' and 'Janszen.'

DUTCH (FLEMISH), FRENCH AND GERMAN NAMES IN BELGIUM

- Flemish names in Belgium are similar to those in the Netherlands. However, there are some differences. The *tussenvoegsel* in Belgium is *often* attached to the last name, such as in Debruin, and is alphabetized under 'D,' regardless of whether the *tussenvoegsel* is attached to the surname.
- French names in Belgium can also have a *tussenvoegsel* and its treatment is similar to that of the Flemish names, i.e. it might be joined to the surname, such as La Roche becoming LaRoche.
- German names are typically unremarkable.

FOR FURTHER READING

WEBSITES

- Familienaam <http://familienaam.be/>
- Belgian surnames: origin and meaning:
<http://belgian-surnames-origin-meaning.skynetblogs.be/>
- Nederlandse Familienamenbank <http://www.meertens.knaw.nl/nfb/>

ARTICLES ONLINE

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